

Courier

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Gang prevention benefits from Cox Communications

Cox Communications announced an unprecedented \$3 million commitment to the youth of Fairfax County to support the county's initiative to advance gang prevention awareness and establish alternative choices.

Gary McCollum, vice president and region manager for Cox Northern Virginia, made the

announcement during the opening session of the Gang Prevention Summit held Feb.

25 at the Fairfax County Government Center that Cox Communications

will contribute \$1 million in direct funding and \$2 million of in-kind local production, programming and



Chairman Gerald E. Connolly receives a symbolic check from Cox Vice President Gary McCollum. (photo by Dick Ballinger)

See Cox donation, page 3

Civil Service Commission resolves grievances and ensures fairness

The process for ensuring fair treatment in the workplace has many aspects in Fairfax County, from mediation through conflict resolution to the final reviews of the county's civil commission. "The Fairfax Civil Service Commission is an impartial county employee grievance appeals panel," said **Karen Woodward**, executive director. "Its decisions are final and binding in grievances involving terminations, suspensions, demotions, written reprimands,

discrimination, retaliation and intimidation for all merit employees who have completed their probationary first year of service with the county. In certain other cases the decisions of the commission are advisory." Five county citizens, appointed by the Board of Supervisors, serve four-year terms on the commission.

The commission also represents the public interest in improving personnel administration in the county competitive

See Commission, page 2

Disputes are the results of opinions and behavior. Both can be changed.

Commission, from page 1

service, holds public hearings and makes recommendations on proposed changes to the county personnel regulations and helps improve personnel standards in the county competitive service.

"The commission always seeks ways to increase the effectiveness of the grievance process," Woodward said, pointing out the results of an important retreat held on May 6, 2004. "The retreat presented a unique opportunity for persons interested in and involved with the county grievance procedures to meet members of the commission, and to offer concerns and recommendations about the grievance process."

The retreat was organized into four panels (1) employee representation groups; (2) Office of the County Attorney, Office of Equity Programs and Department of Human Resources; (3) individual employees, and (4) county agency and department heads. From discussions in each panel came some excellent information and recommendations.

causing employees remaining in the workplace to feel ostracized by colleagues and supervisors. Management representatives also expressed dissatisfaction with the length of time before the hearing is held, documentation and production requirements, and disruptions imposed by the preparation of documents. These were also described as burdensome for management.

After considering the recommendations made during the retreat, the commission identified several items upon which attention will be focused during the coming year:

1. Collaborating with employee representation groups and the Human Resources department to examine and develop procedures to expedite the grievance process;
2. Developing a handbook on the grievance process;
3. Developing training and instructional materials for employee and supervisory training programs; and
4. Initiating a study on grievances filed with the commission to reflect individual depart-

ments, PATCO (professional, administrative, technical, clerical, and other job categories), and

"The commission always seeks ways to increase the effectiveness of the grievance process"

One important recommendation that emerged from each panel was the need for more information about the commission, its functions and decisions.

A second recommendation was that the commission has the unique opportunity to address issues and report findings to the Board of Supervisors on management situations and practices that negatively impact employees and undermine the established personnel function or grievance procedure.

Both of these recommendations are being implemented by the commission.

Participants in the retreat offered other observations. Many employees feel overwhelmed by the process. Adequate and appropriate preparation for the hearing is difficult and may be expensive if competent representation is required. The waiting period before the commission hears an appeal often seems long. Final commission decisions are often made long after the occurrence of issues and events,

EEO categories.

Addressing the concerns of the Employee Advisory Council, the commission also recommended to the Board of Supervisors the internal auditor's office conduct a study to determine whether the Pay for Performance system is being implemented fairly with an equitable distribution of awards.

In the future, the commission may host additional forums like this retreat and will welcome participation of the commissioners, staff and individual employees.

The commission welcomes input from all participant groups at any time. Its meetings are open and publicized through the Office of Public Affairs. Located in the Herrity Building, Suite 103, 12055 Government Center Parkway, the commission hours are 7:30 – 4:00 p.m. daily. The commission has an open door policy and **Karen L. Woodward**, executive director, can be contacted at 703-324-2930, TTY 711 or fax 703-324-2936. ■

Cox donation, from page 1

public service announcements over the next eight years, while aiming to expand the presence of Boys and Girls Clubs throughout the Fairfax community. Only one Boys and Girls Club operates in the county, the Culmore Character Club, located in the Culmore-Bailey's Crossroads area.

Working with other private and corporate contributors and the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Greater Washington area, Cox's financial commitment will include both initial seed money to help get additional clubs established, as well as funding towards the ongoing

operating costs and activities of the clubs.

"I would not be the man I am today, nor would I be in this fortunate position were it not for the Boys and Girls Clubs," McCollum said. "Growing up in the housing projects of Richmond, I was faced with many of the same challenges and tough choices the youth in our community face today. The Boys and Girls Club helped steer me to the path to become a good citizen and not the path that leads towards gangs and trouble. Cox Communications is excited about the opportunity to avail this wonderful resource to more of our youth in more areas of the county." ■

The next First Friday is April 1, hosted at the Public Safety/JDR Court on level 1 of the Massey Building. Meet and talk with the county executive and top management leaders.

Hundreds of local job seekers and entrepreneurs attend Family Services' expo

The Government Center was the place to be on Saturday, March 5, when the Department of Family Services' hosted the first-ever Career and Entrepreneurship Expo, "Envision Your Success."

Hundreds of local job seekers and prospective entrepreneurs came to network with and learn from more than 40 top employers and small business advisors. Board of Supervisors Chairman **Gerald E. Connolly** gave the keynote address at a Business Partnership Awards ceremony that kicked off the event. It was standing room only in the workshops, where participants learned about careers in high-growth industries and how to start a business. This was the first such event in the region to bring employment and small business development resources together under one roof.

Planning partners for the Expo included SkillSource Centers in Fairfax County and the Center for Business Planning and Development (both operated by Fairfax County Family Services staff under the auspices of the Northern Virginia Workforce

Investment Board), the Business Development Assistance Group (a local nonprofit organization focused on small business development for ethnic minorities), and the SkillSource Group, Inc., a regional partnership. For more information, please contact **Aimee Brobst** at 703-533-5321, TTY 711. ■



Interviews, discussions, networking and just plain information gathering was the order of business at the expo. (photo by Mr. Kahn of Buddy Photo)

Community Development Block Grant program celebrates 30 years

Fairfax County will observe Community Development Week, March 28 - April 3, in conjunction with a national recognition of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The county's CDBG funds are administered through the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

According to **Paula C. Sampson**, director of HCD, "Since 1975, the county has received more than \$153.5 million in CDBG funds which have been used to provide decent affordable housing, neighborhood improvements, revitalization, community facilities, and critical services to benefit thousands of low and moderate income residents, including the elderly and the disabled." CDBG funding is the basis of the county's revitalization program and helps supply necessary dollars to build new projects like the Department of Housing and Community Development's new Homeownership Resource Center.

But these funds touch more than just those who work with housing. CDBG helps build community centers, jumpstart local outreach programs and even supply those in need with necessities like food and transportation.

Awareness of the impact of CDBG funding

in the county and throughout the country is particularly important this year since the Federal administration proposed FY 2006 federal budget, released in February, eliminating the \$4.7 billion CDBG program, replacing it and 17 other programs with a new federal economic development programs focused on the neediest communities. Fairfax County, whose FY 2006 annual funding is \$6.9 million, would be one of the roughly 400 localities likely ineligible to receive funding after 30 years.

Celebrating Community Development Week is a national initiative supported by many organizations including the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities and the National Community Development Association. This year's national theme is "CDBG: Communities on the Rise." Hopefully, as discussions continue over the next few weeks, legislators will hear the most important message of all: that for Fairfax County and other counties like it, CDBG funding is imperative to many community projects.

To learn more about the county's CDBG program contact the Department of Housing and Community Development at 703-246-5170, TTY 711. ■

**HR Central
now provides
"one-stop shopping"
for all your
human resource
needs.**

Employees recognized for service



On March 11, the county honored 593 employees who have completed 20 (309 employees), 25 (207 employees), 30 (61 employees), 35 (13 employees) and 40 (three employees) years of service. "This is the largest group ever of employees being recognized for continued service with the county," said **Peter Schroth**, director of Human Resources.

Pictured are two of the three 40-year veterans: **Kathryn Halpern**, Library, and **George Ashley**, Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court, (center) with Supervisor **Penny Gross**, Chairman **Gerald E. Connolly** and County Executive **Tony Griffin**. Forty-year veteran **John Pricci**, Health Department, is not pictured. ■

CareFirst selects new pharmacy claims manager

Members in FairChoice+BlueChoice and BluePreferred PPO take note!

Beginning April 1, prescriptions filled at your pharmacy will be processed by Argus Health Systems (Argus). Your benefits and co-payments, however, will not change. All local pharmacies currently affiliated with CareFirst are among the 59,000 pharmacies in the Argus network.

New identification cards will not be issued because the pharmacies have been given the necessary information to process your claims. Argus claim forms for submitting claims yourself will be available after April 1, from www.carefirst.com.

Walgreens Mail Order Service will process your mail order prescription orders after April 1. In most cases, if you have refills remaining, your mail order prescriptions will transfer to Walgreens. Controlled substances and compounded medications will require new written prescriptions.

A mailorder enrollment packet will be sent to those who currently receive mail-order prescriptions. You must register with

Walgreens before filling a new or refill prescription.

If you aren't currently taking advantage of mail order services, visit www.walgreensmail.com/carefirst on or after April 1, to learn more.

Should you have any questions about the change, you may call:

- ♦ Member Services at CareFirst on 800-296-0724, or
- ♦ Pharmacy Member Services on 800-241-3371, or
- ♦ For mail order questions, Walgreens Member Services will have a dedicated member service phone number for CareFirst members effective March 15 which is 800-745-6285. ■



Focus on Benefits



County Medical Donor Program makes it easy for donors

The County Medical Donor Program allows county employees to donate blood, bone marrow or organs on county time. With permission of their supervisor, merit employees who donate blood or participate in bone marrow testing, are granted administrative leave for recuperative purposes, not to exceed four hours. The time begins when the employee leaves the work site to go to the donating or testing location. If employees are turned down from making a donation due to medical or other reasons, then administrative leave will be used for the amount of time they are absent from the work site.

Merit employees who donate bone marrow

shall be granted up to five days of administrative leave for recuperation. Organ donors are granted up to 30 days of administrative leave for the medical procedure and recuperation. Exempt limited term employees are not granted administrative leave.

"This is a very positive program that allows us to help our fellow employees in time of crisis," said **Susan Woodruff**, deputy director, DHR.

For more information on this program, please refer to Personnel/Payroll Administration Policies and Procedures Memorandum #12, dated Aug. 23, 2001, or call **Margaret Savage**, DHR, at 703-324-3357, TTY 703-222-7314. ■

**Classified ads
are on the
Infoweb**

New Online Time e-mail feature

With the new automated e-mail feature you only have to sign onto Online Time once, request transaction #40 to display your pay advice and press F4. This will take you to the signup screen where you can elect to receive your pay advice by e-mail every time payroll runs without ever having to sign in again. You can check your e-mail from home or while on travel. If you only want this feature while on vacation or travel, you can turn it off just as easily when you return to work. E-mails will be sent out the Tuesday before payday. Check your hours and earnings early – and check out the “new

look” of the online advice. It’s quick and easy!

If viewing your pay advice from home and it’s not formatted correctly, just click on the box in the upper right corner “View As Web Page.”

For Blackberry users, we are currently working on a text message that will contain high level data that you will be able to view on your wireless device.

Please contact the Payroll Division, DHR, at 703-324-3412 (menu option 4), TTY 703-222-7314 if you have questions or need additional information. ■

**The
Transportation Summit
was held March 14.
Parts of the event will
be replayed on
Channel 16 on :**
· Sat., Mar. 19 at 8 p.m.
· Mon. Mar. 28 at 8 p.m.
· Mon., April 11 at 8 p.m.

Fairfax County Federal Credit Union

2005 annual meeting

It’s time to exercise your ownership rights at your credit union and time to elect the volunteer members who will guide your financial institution into the future. Plan to attend the 2005 annual meeting on Tuesday, March 29, at noon, in the Fairfax County Government Center (rooms 2/3), 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. There will be a brief business meeting and the election results will be given. There will be refreshments and great door prizes. ■

Herndon branch opening

You are invited to attend the grand opening of the new Herndon branch of the FCFCU, on Saturday, April 2, at 10 a.m. for the ribbon cutting ceremony. The new branch is located at 3065-C Centreville Road (in the McLearen Square). There will be free food, great gifts and door prizes!

Reminder: If you live, work, worship, attend school and/or volunteer in Fairfax County you are eligible to join. So sign up today and tell your family and friends too! ■

Connect with the County Exec

On Wednesday, March 23, beginning at 2:30 p.m., County Executive **Tony Griffin**, along with **Ed Long**, chief financial officer, and **Susan Datta**, director of the Department of Management and Budget, will be featured on the next “Connect with the County Exec” program. The topic will be the proposed county budget for fiscal year 2006 and what it means to county employees.

The interactive staff meeting on the budget will be broadcast live on the Fairfax County Training Network on that day at 2:30 p.m. Employees can view the program on FCTN, and call or e-mail questions for the county executive and panel members during the program.

Agencies are encouraged to reserve an area for employees to watch the program, if possible. Employees may also watch the program in:

- ♦ Room 425 in the Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax
- ♦ Room 107 in the Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax
- ♦ Room 1003 on the 10th floor of the Pennino Building, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax
- ♦ Conference room 217 at the South County Center, 8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria

For information about the program, call the Office of Public Affairs at 703-324-3187, TTY 703-324-2935. ■

Briefs

New e-mail services are coming

The weekend of March 26 the Department of Information Technology will be implementing Microsoft Exchange 2003. This new version of Exchange will provide an overall improvement for e-mail services performance. Enhancements include improved security and anti-spam capabilities as well as improved user productivity features and system reliability. The desktop client version of Outlook will not change visually, but the upgrade includes a new version of Outlook Web Access (OWA) that includes several new features that traditionally have only been available via the desktop client version. OWA users will now have a spell checker, context menus accessible by a right mouse click, personal tasks, message signatures and more. DIT has a demo of the new Outlook Web Access available for employees to gain familiarity with the application before the upgrade. The demo link can be found in the instructions at this link: <http://infoweb/DIT/TID/SSB/Exchange2003/>. A FAQ document is available for you as well. Should you have questions about the upgrades to Exchange or the new OWA, please contact your agency IT staff or the Technical Support Center at 703-222-3535, option #1, TTY 711.

Volunteer stream cleanup

On Jan. 28, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors unanimously declared April 2 as "Fairfax Clean Stream Day." You can volunteer to help clean up the streams in Fairfax County on Saturday, April 2, from 9 a.m. - noon. There are more than 60 sites throughout Fairfax County where you can volunteer to pick up trash in streams and along stream banks. Find out more information

and how you can sign up to volunteer by calling the Stormwater Planning Division at 703-324-5500, TTY 711, or visiting the Web page at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/stormwater.

First annual COG Animal Services Awards

The Animal Services Division is proud to announce that it received two awards from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. On Friday, Feb. 25, the first annual COG Animal Services Awards ceremony was held in Washington, D.C. with **Liz Crenshaw** of NBC TV-4 news serving as emcee. Out of seven nominees, Animal Control Officers **Jennifer Roberts, Andrew Sanderson** and **Mary Zambrano** received an award for their performance during the rescue of a juvenile black bear.

Also recognized for their outstanding volunteer performance was the team of **Pete Barnes, Susie Cooper, Nancy Fluhr, Michael Lasky, Jami Ojafa** and **Mary O'Malley**. Fairfax County Supervisor **Penny Gross** (Mason District), was chosen as the Elected Official of the Year. Gross also currently chairs the COG Public Safety Committee. For additional information, contact **Mary Zambrano** in the Animal Services Division at 703-830-3681, TTY 711.

Courier
Photo Contest
Deadline is April 15
(see Feb. 18 Courier
for rules and information)

Call For nominations – "ERICA" Award

The ERICA (Employee Recycling Committee Award) recognizes those

Briefs

individuals or groups within county government who have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to recycling in the workplace. Please go to the Employee Recycling Committee Infoweb page to find out more about the award, the criteria for nominations and the entry form. The deadline for nominations is close of business Monday, March 28. The ERICA will be awarded in April and the winner(s) will be announced in NewsLink, *Courier* and the Committee's Infoweb site. For more information, please contact **Marion Plummer** at 703-324-5451, TTY 711.

Save the county mailing fees

You can save money when mailing items. Consider these tips:

- ♦ Use interagency mail and have your mail delivered in one day at no cost to your agency.
- ♦ Place mail to other county departments in the interagency envelopes (not white letter size) so that it will be processed by the mail room correctly and not charged as postage.
- ♦ Send mail to be sent outside of county agencies to the Mail Room so that the county can receive a discount for pre-sorted metered mail.
- ♦ If your department has its own postage meter, contact Mail Services for ideas on saving additional money.

For more information on mailing options, contact **Pat Burton** in Mail Services at 703-324-2976, TTY 711.

EAC Spring Craft Show...

...is today, March 18, beginning at 9 a.m. in the Government Center, first floor.

Note

The budget article in the March 4 *Courier* was prepared by **Barbara Emerson**, Department of Management and Budget. ■

Easy Access to Documents You Use Often

Microsoft Word displays the most recently used files at the bottom of the File menu (four to nine document names). If you cannot remember a current document's name this is a nice place to start your hunt. Now, on one of your highly productive days, the document list has rotated this important document off the list, leaving you in a major turmoil as you attempt to remember the title. To help ease this panic attack is a great Word feature few people know about that you can easily add to one of your Menu or Tool bars. The Work menu comes in handy because it allows you to maintain a list of documents you access regularly or even intermittently. Here are the steps to add the

Work menu and how to maintain your document selections.

To add the Work menu to a toolbar:

1. On the Tools menu, click Customize, and then click the Commands tab.
 2. In the Categories box, click Built-in Menus.
 3. In the Commands box, left-click Work and drag it to your menu bar of choice.
 4. Close the Customize Window.
- With the Work menu in place, you can add any open and saved Word document to your list. Here are the options:
- ♦ To add the current document to the Work menu, on the Work menu, click Add to Work Menu.

Tech Tip #91

Department of Information Technology
Technical Infrastructure Division
Technical Support Center
Fairfax County Government Center
12000 Government Center Pkwy. Suite 167
Fairfax, VA 22035
Tel: 703-222-3535, #1
Fax: 703-222-3396
TTY 711

- ♦ To open a document on the Work menu, click the document you want to open.

- ♦ To remove a document from the Work menu, press **CTRL+ALT+-** (dash key). Your cursor will look like a large, bold underscore. Go to the Work menu; click the document you want to remove.

Note: The Work menu also only holds nine documents. So keep that in mind, because when you attempt to save number ten, the oldest document will be bumped off. ■

In this case, it /S easy being green

Would you like to show your support for the county's great park system? You can now with one of the new green plastic wristbands that carry the words "Preserve, Protect, Play." The wristbands are patterned after the trend-setting Lance Armstrong LiveStrong bracelets.

The goal of the project is to increase awareness of the the county's park system and projects that support it. If you "go green," you'll show your support and awareness.

The bracelets are being sold for \$2 in all county park recreation facilities. Bracelets also will be available in the Maps and Publications office of the Government Center.

For more information on this project, call 703-324-8581. ■



Members of the Oak Marr RecCenter sent a picture to show they've "gone green." (bracelet photo by Don Sweeney, Park Authority)

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